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C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 000538

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EAPS/MLS FOR AARON COPE AND IO/UNP FOR PAUL WICKBERG

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/13/2018

TAGS: PREL PHUM FR BR

SUBJECT: BURMA REFERENDUM: FRANCE SEEKS P-3 UNITY BEFORE DEMARCHING ASEAN

REF: 08 STATE 26677

Classified By: Political Counselor Andrew Young for reasons 1.4(B) and (D)

Poloff delivered reftel demarche to MFA Burma desk officer Jeremie Petite on March 14 outlining our view that Burma's proposed May referendum will not adhere to internationally accepted standards for free and fair elections. Petite agreed with U.S. concerns, but said France does not want to reject the referendum outright in deference to lack of ASEAN unity. Noting that France believes ASEAN is critical to successful pressure on Burma, Petite said the French proposed as an initial step to consult with UK counterparts on March 27 and follow with P-3 talks to achieve a unified position on how best to enlist ASEAN in next steps with Burma.

Please visit Paris' Classified Website at:
[http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/paris/index.c fm](http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/paris/index.cfm)

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